

NEW JERSEY

2000-2001

Guidelines and
Application**BEST
PRACTICES****Deadline for Application to County Office:
NOVEMBER 27, 2000**

The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category Gifted and Talented (Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name I.D.E.A.S. (Independent Developmental Enrichment Activities for Students)
Number of Schools with Practice 1 (If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)

County	Bergen
District (Proper Name)	Oradell School District
Address	350 Prospect Avenue Street/P. O. Box Oradell New Jersey 07649 City Zip Code
Telephone	201-261-1153 X113 Fax 201-261-1167 Email
Chief School Administrator	Karen A. Lake
Nominated School #1 (Proper Name)	Oradell School District
Address	350 Prospect Avenue Street/P. O. Box City Oradell New Jersey Zip Code 07649
Telephone	201-261-1153 X113 Fax 201-261-1167 Email
Principal	William Scott Ryan
Program Developer(s)	Tracey Schaum, Diane Malwitz
Application Prepared By	Tracey Schaum, Diane Malwitz
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	<i>Karen A. Lake</i>

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLYApproved: ☒ Yes ☐ No County Superintendent's Signature*Garon R. Graham*

**NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION**

Application Requirements: Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

1. **RESPONSES to the information and the statements below must be ANONYMOUS and ACCURATE.** No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements
2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4.** Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
3. Application must be **keybarded on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, portrait format. Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font must be used.** (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)
4. **KEYBARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be **no more than a total of four pages.** Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response. Format your response for accuracy and clarity.
5. The information on page 4 and the responses to statements must be copied on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
6. The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
7. The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by **November 27, 2000**, with the **Itemized List of District Applications** form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School	Grade Levels	Practice Name <u>I.D.E.A.S. (Independent Developmental Enrichment Activities for all Students)</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School	<u>K-6</u>	Number of Schools with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School	<u> </u>	Number of Districts with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School	<u> </u>	Location <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/City <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban With Urban Characteristics
<input type="checkbox"/> High School	<u> </u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town <input type="checkbox"/> Rural
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: <u> </u>	<u> </u>	

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gifted and Talented Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness
<input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education and Diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development	<input type="checkbox"/> World Languages
	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.
3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

The practice proposed for recognition is the I.D.E.A.S. Program (Independent Developmental Enrichment Activities for all Students). The IDEAS Program, a four tier enrichment program, curriculum defines four tiers or levels of enrichment as follows:

- TIER 1: All students gain experiences and benefit from school wide assemblies, grade level specific field trips and school sponsored contests.
- TIER 2: All students benefit from services. Experiences include differentiated classroom curriculum enrichment activities provided by homeroom teachers.
- TIER 3: Some students need special alternatives. Independent study projects are encouraged. Tier 3 Independent Study Projects are intended as enrichment to the regular curriculum for students who possess exceptional motivation, ability and task commitment., but who may or may not qualify for tier 4 instruction.
- TIER 4: Identified students are provided a pull-out program which is based on a modified enrichment triad model as defined by Dr. Joseph Renzulli. (note: Tier 4 students may also complete Tier 3 Independent Study Projects.)

It is an innovative program because enrichment and gifted and talented programs don't often coexist in a district and come in many forms. Tier 1 provides all children broad exposure to a variety of disciplines. Tier 2 provides activities which are enrichment extensions of the regular classroom curriculum. Tier 3 provides individual learners with an opportunity to investigate "things that keep them up at night". It allows them to be the expert and teach their peers about their topic, thereby providing additional enrichment to the class. For instance, a fourth grade student who recently moved to town wanted to learn about the architecture and history of the town she moved to. After a series of interviews with long-time residents, members of the New Jersey Historical Society, and help from the school and town librarians, she chose to create a photo journalistic history scrapbook as her final project. Her final presentation to her classmates was a colorful oral and pictorial history of the town, which described where important buildings were once located, why they had moved as the population grew, and provided a new, more historic appreciation of neighbor's houses and their own school building. Tier 4 provides learners with exceptional ability, an opportunity to learn advanced level topics such as genetics, architecture, philosophy and law in grades 4 through six. Tier 4 consists of content lessons, topic related independent study projects, an opportunity to showcase their learning, and peer, teacher, and student self-evaluations. The IDEAS Program provides all students of all ability levels with unlimited opportunities for enrichment thereby promoting high student achievement. The IDEAS Program provides both cognitive and affective objectives.

The objectives are:

- Students will be engaged in critical and creative thinking, and problem solving.
- Students strengths and individual interests will be emphasized to allow more flexible teaching/learning environments.
- Students will become aware of their ability to be independent, self-directed, and disciplined in their learning, and evaluate their own interests, abilities, and strengths.
- Students will be presented with content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- Students will focus on open-ended tasks.
- Students will develop research skills and methods.
- Students will be encouraged to develop products that challenge existing ideas and produce new ideas.
- Students will be encouraged to develop products that use new techniques, materials, and forms.

- Students will be able to recognize and appreciate the like-nesses and differences between themselves and others. Students will develop a better understanding of tolerance and the diversity and uniqueness of human nature regardless of ability, talent, or contribution.
 - Students will better understand the connected-ness of leadership skills, risk-taking, decision-making, question raising, and networking.
 - Students will work in cooperative groups and contribute as members of a learning community.
2. **List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.**

Due to the blending of both traditional pull out and school-wide enrichment programs, many of the Core Curriculum Content Standards are addressed. There is an emphasis placed on the Science and Social Studies standards in each of the nine specific study units in Tier 4. In addition, Tier 3 projects often incorporate any number and combination of Core Curriculum Content Standards dependent on the chosen topic.

Within the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, the following Science and Social Studies Standards/Indicators are addressed:

- 5.1 All students will learn to identify systems of interacting components and understand how their interactions combine to produce the overall behavior of the system. (5.1:2,4)
- 5.2 All students will develop problem solving, decision making, and inquiry skills, reflected by formulating usable questions and hypotheses, planning experiments, conducting systematic observations, interpreting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and communicating results. (5.2:1,2,10,14,15)
- 5.3 All students will develop an understanding of how people of various cultures have contributed to the advancement of science and technology, and how major discoveries and events have advanced science and technology. (5.3:3,4,5)
- 6.2 All students will learn democratic citizenship through the humanities, by studying literature, art, history and philosophy, and related fields. (6.2:3,6)
- 6.4 All students will acquire historical understanding of societal ideas and forces throughout the history of New Jersey, The United States, and the World.(6.4:7,10)

Tier 4 thematic units highlight many of the Core Curriculum Content Standards in Science and Social Studies. Grades 4, 5, and 6 each have a theme, Thought, Movement and Structure respectively. Each unit within a theme seeks to encompass many disciplines while offering advanced level content to gifted students. One example of a unit within a theme is Genetics (human structures). Students would participate and contribute to a series of 6-8 content lessons related to cell structure, DNA make-up, heredity, cloning, genetic engineering, major advancements past and current in the field of Genetics, and major contributors in the field.(5.1, 5.3) During this time a guest speaker such as a parent or community member working in a related field would speak to the students or if appropriate a field trip would be planned. Students then chose an independent study project related to Genetics and focusing on their individual strength areas. A student who loved to read, write and critique movies chose to design a project based on the movie Jurassic Park. After watching the movie the student acted out and video taped an interview with a genetic expert (herself!) who critiqued the film. She clearly determined what must definitely be fiction and what had scientific merit based on the unit of study. Half of the class then organized, prepared for, and participated in a debate as to whether cloning should be banned by the US government. The other half of the class completed an internet Web Quest on the ethical concerns of various public interest groups related to the cloning of Dolly the sheep.(6.2, 6.4)

The following Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards/Indicators are addressed:
Standard 2 Students will use information, technology, and other tools. (2:2,6,8,9)
Standard 3 All students will use critical thinking, decision making, and problem-solving skills. (3:5,12,13,15)
Standard 4 All students will demonstrate self-management skills. (4:1,3,9,10)

Tier 3 Independent Projects highlight the Cross-Content Workplace Standards noted above by virtue of the student-directed nature of the investigation, planning and execution of such projects. Students demonstrate self-management skills by setting short and long-term goals for their project (4.1) and must use their time efficiently in order to bring the project to completion (4.9). They must learn, apply and expand their own knowledge and skills (4.10) as that is the basis for an independent learning pursuit. Throughout the project students must utilize various resources (3.5), interpret and analyze data that applies to the study (3.12), draw conclusions which will become the answer to their thesis question. In order to select and prepare a product for presentation students apply problem-solving skills to select the most appropriate format(3.15) and use a variety of information and technology to investigate and prepare products (2.2,6,8,9). Lastly students must self-evaluate (4.3). One example is of a Kindergarten student who chose to do a project on the differences between the organ and the piano. He was an exceptionally gifted pianist at his young age and had heard the church organ one Sunday. He said that he wanted to do this project, "...because when I heard the organ I could feel it all through my chest and it made me wonder if I could play it just the same way I play the piano." With the guidance of the IDEAS Program teacher this student researched the history of the church organ, the composers who composed music for it, how the pipes, pedals, stops and knobs changed the quality of the sounds produced and corresponded by e-mail with an accomplished organist in Vienna. At the conclusion of the research, the student met with this organist for a private lesson on an area church organ. The lesson was video-taped by his mother, and the student presented what he'd learned along with a science experiment that demonstrated how pipe length and width affects pitch. His peer and teacher evaluations were exceptional, as was his own self-evaluation. (CCCS 5.2) Truly a confidence building, quality learning experience for a special needs child!

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

Our school imagined a new program that would address the needs of all children by providing high-end learning activities while encouraging students to become life-long learners. The reality of those early imaginations was a four-tier enrichment program called The IDEAS Program.

The nine-member curriculum committee included grade-level representatives from kindergarten-through sixth grade, a special area teacher, the director of special services, and the teacher of the existing pull out program. The committee at its initial meeting agreed that the existing gifted and talented program needed to have more stringent criteria for entrance in order to identify those truly gifted children, and yet, they felt that all students possess gifts and talents which when provided a forum for expression would promote a love for learning and success. As a result, the following criteria for participation in Tier 4 exists: Total Math/Total Reading from Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Test of Cognitive Abilities (CogAT), Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics Assessment, and Science Assessment from Fourth Grade New Jersey ESPA test, grade level Portfolio Assessment benchmarks, and Teacher Recommendation. As part of the Five-Year Curriculum Revision Plan, the criteria is subject to revision each year as needs dictate.

Again, due to the multi-faceted and school-wide inclusiveness of this program, it would be difficult to document all of the specific examples and types of assessment used. In general they are as follows for Tier 3 and Tier 4.

The assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of Tier 3 Independent Study Projects have been met are:

Brainstorming- Students brainstorm a list of topics they are interested in as part of an interest inventory.

Long term planning- Students list and plan steps necessary for project completion, giving estimated completion times for each step.

Information gathering- Students independently collect a variety of resources, read them, and begin the note taking process.

Formulation of a thesis question- Based on the information gathered, students define the purpose of their study.

Completion of research- Student presents completed notes to the Enrichment Teacher, summarizing their learning.

Product selection- Based on review of their learning and careful consideration of their talent areas, students choose a final product which best presents that learning.

Presentation- Student presents final product to their homeroom class.

Student Self-Evaluation- Student completes a checklist reflecting on the degree to which outlined goals have been met.

Peer Evaluation- A feedback form is completed by homeroom students citing something new that they have learned and rating the quality and originality of the presentation.

Teacher Evaluation- Follows same form as Peer Evaluation Form above.

The assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of Tier 4 have been met are:

Teacher evaluation- Of student's response to questions, contributions to class discussions, level of participation in group activities, fluency, flexibility, and elaboration of student ideas, and products resulting from independent study and problem-solving activities.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

The IDEAS Program lends itself well to any K-12 School setting. Armed with an IDEAS Program Curriculum Guide, a district would then identify criteria for selection of Tier 4 students, choose grade level themes and units or utilize those listed in the Curriculum, and schedule Tier 3 Independent Study Project resource time. Then the practice need only be tailored to each individual student's needs and abilities.